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DR. PIERCE'S

REMINISCENCES OF FORTY YEARS,

DELIVERED, IN BROOKLINE,

19 MARCH, 1837.

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REMINISCENCES OF FORTY YEARS,

DELIVERED,

19 MARCH, 1837,

THE LORD'S DAY AFTER THE COMPLETION OF FORTY YEARS FROM HIS SETTLEMENT IN THE MINISTRY, IN

BROOKLINE,

7551.105

BY JOHN PIERCE, D. D.
The fifth Pastor of the Congregational Church and Society, in Brookline.

PRINTED, BUT NOT PUBLISHED, BY SUBSCRIPTION AMONG HIS PEOPLE.

BOSTON,
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1837.

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7357
May 3, 1866.
From Rev. A. S.

As the author has already published two historical discourses relating to this Town and Church; the first, delivered, on 24 November, 1805, at the termination of a century from the incorporation of the Town; and the second, on 9 November, 1817, the Lord's day after the completion of a century from the gathering of the Church, he will not be expected to repeat many facts contained in those Memoirs. But, as he shall have frequent occasion to refer to them, to save needless repetition, he will designate the former by the letters T. C. D. and the latter by C. C. D.

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CITY OF BOSTON

REMINISCENCES OF FORTY YEARS.

DEUTERONOMY VIII. 2.

Thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God led thee, these forty years.

It is common in scripture to recall the memory of the past. This, it is obvious, is the part of wisdom. How else shall we be sensible of divine mercies? How else shall we make a suitable improvement of our trials? How else shall we realize the swift flight of time, and seize the fleeting moments, as they pass? How else shall we be mindful of our defects and sins, and "flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us"? How else shall we prepare for the destination, which awaits us?

Accordingly Moses, the man of God, the conductor of the Israelites from Egypt, the place of their servitude, to Canaan, the land of their inheritance, employs the whole book, from which the text is taken, in recapitulating their distinguished national mercies, in reviewing their trials, in bringing to mind the principal scenes, during their peregrinations in the wilderness, in admonishing them of their egregious transgressions, and in showing them by what means they might become and continue a prosperous and happy people.

As, during the past week, the exact period, to which Moses so expressively refers, has elapsed from the commencement of the pastoral connexion between the minister* and people in this place, the thought has suggested itself to my mind, that an appropriate use might be made of the monition, with which I introduced my discourse. "Thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God led thee, these forty years."

I. Let me then begin the memorial of events, in which we are mutually interested, by a brief review of our privileges and blessings, as a religious society.

By adverting to the "Discourse, delivered, on 24 November, 1805, the day, which completed a century from the incorporation of the Town," you will find, that the early settlers of this place found many difficulties† in procuring and enjoying religious, as well as municipal privileges. For about three quarters of a century, it formed a part of the neighboring Capital, to which the inhabitants here addressed repeated and earnest petitions, before they could obtain their consent to become incorporated. Similar difficulties prevented their formation of a religious society; so that the first meeting house was not raised, till 10 November, 1714.‡ Its Dedication sermon was preached, on 3 June, 1715, by the Rev. Nehemiah Walter, pastor of the First Church, in Roxbury, for several years colleague with the divine, familiarly denominated the apostle Eliot.‖

* Ordained, 15 March, 1797. † T. C. D. p. 8.

‡ The builders were Deacon Samuel Clark and Mr Isaac Gardner, inhabitants of the Town, and members of the Church; the former died, 7 May, 1766, aged 81; the latter, 11 March, 1767, aged 83. Deacon Samuel Clark was the first, who was published in the New Meeting house.

‖ It is not a little remarkable that the ministry of these two divines extended to 120 years; the Rev. John Eliot having been in the ministry 58 years, and the Rev. Nehemiah Walter, 62 years.

This Church was gathered, on 26 October, 1717, nearly one hundred and twenty years ago. By this it appears, that your present pastor has officiated here, a little more than one third of the period, since this Church was formed.

The Rev. James Allen, first pastor of this Church, was a man of piety and talents.* For the greater part of his ministry, he and his people were happily united. During the troublous times, which deeply agitated the Churches, in this region, just before the middle of the last century, he was active in the new measures, which were then pursued, and prepared for "The Christian History,"† a glowing account of a most glorious Revival of religion here, in which he was greatly instrumental.

But from certain causes, to such excesses did it lead, that he, who had, during its progress, considered it, as the work of God, in a public and explicit manner ascribed it to a very different origin.

No sooner was this tergiversation made known, than a portion of his Church abjured his Church and ministry, loaded him with reproaches,‡ formed a separate society, in this Town, and after employing, for a course of years, lay exhorters and preachers, on 17 January, 1751, ordained, as their stated pastor, Mr Jonathan Hyde,‖ a zealous, but illiterate layman from Canterbury, Connecticut.

* T. C. D. p. 13. What I then conjectured, I have since ascertained to be fact; that Mr Allen, according to the custom of the times, preached his own ordination sermon, which was from Matthew xxiv. 45, 46, 47. "Who then is a faithful and wise servant" &c.

† Published, in Boston, 1743, in two volumes. The work was expressly designed to publish accounts of Revivals of religion, and was edited by Thomas Prince, son of the Rev. Thomas Prince, minister of the Old South Church, Boston. For the above mentioned Document see Appendix I.

‡ See Appendix II. ‖ He died, 4 June, 1787, Æt. 78.

It has been uniformly represented to me, as the evident effect of these convulsions on the mind of the first pastor, that he fell into a decline, and expired, at the age of fifty six.*

In about a year after his decease, the Church gave a united call to Mr Cotton Brown, son of a former minister of Haverhill; and the people were about to proceed peaceably to his settlement. In the mean time, certain "busy bodies in other men's matters" circulated the report, which was not slow in travelling, that he was an unsafe spiritual guide.

Now could they have prevailed on the Church to call a Council to settle the matter, in the nomination of which they should have had a share, it would not have been difficult to find ministers, who would have confirmed these rash judgments, and thus have increased and perpetuated, instead of healing the incipient divisions. But your fathers more wisely decided, as they were to sit under his ministry, and to support him, as their pastor, to judge for themselves.

Accordingly they called a meeting of the Church, and passed the following resolutions.†

"That although this Church, when they gave Mr Cotton Brown a call to be their pastor, were well satisfied with regard to his principles in religion, as far as they were able to form a judgment of the same from his public preaching; yet, inasmuch as there have been, since that time, rumors abroad, as well as jealousies at home, in the minds of some among ourselves, as if Mr Brown was not sound in the faith; therefore,

* The Rev. James Allen died, 18 February, 1747, Æt. 56. His wife Mehetable, daughter of the Rev. Jeremiah Shepard, of Lynn, died, 27 June, 1748, Æt. 62. For singular vicissitudes in their family, see appendix III.

† Brookline Church Records.

"Voted, That Mr Brown be desired more fully to communicate his principles to this Church, and to lay before them the articles of his faith, which desire Mr Brown readily complied with.*

"Upon which it was voted, that this Church are fully satisfied with regard to Mr Brown's principles, and do approve of the same, as being, in their apprehension, agreeable to the oracles of truth."

They then proceeded to call a Council for his ordination, which took place, on 26 October, 1748.†

His ministry was duly estimated, the short time it lasted; for he expired, on 13 April, 1751, having sustained the ministerial office but two years, five months, and eighteen days.‡

To show how differently this young divine was considered by the Separatists of the day, and those most competent to form a correct judgment, I will rehearse the character given of him, at the time of his decease, by the eminent Dr Cooper, of Brattle Street Church, Boston, his class-mate at the University.

"On the 13th instant, died, at Brookline, the Rev. Cotton Brown, pastor of the Church, in this place, son of the Rev. John Brown, of Haverhill; a gentleman, who, by the happiness of his genius, his application to study, and taste for polite literature, his piety and prudence, his sweetness of temper, and softness of manners, had raised in his friends the fairest hopes, and gave them just reason to expect in him one of the brightest ornaments of society, and a peculiar blessing to the Church.

"The short time he sustained the ministerial charac-

* See Appendix IV. † T. C. D. p. 15.

‡ Mr Brown was engaged to be married to Mary Allen, only daughter of his predecessor; and the house now owned by Reuben Hunting was raised for him.

ter, he so well performed the duties proper to it, that he has left with his charge a very lasting remembrance.

"In public he clearly taught and persuasively urged and enforced the important truths and duties of christianity with a voice and manner singularly engaging, and expressive of the modesty and benignity of his nature. His example, at the same time, gave a peculiar force to his sermons; and in his life we saw those beauties of holiness exerted into action, which in his discourses he so handsomely recommended; so that those, who heard him from the desk, admired his talents, as a preacher; and those, who conversed with him, in private life, the more intimately they did so, the more were they charmed with his virtues, as a christian.

"To such a person no death could be sudden or premature. Young as he was, he had looked through the world with too piercing an eye, to be loth to leave it, at the call of God; and had learned to die, at an age when but few, in any good measure, have learned to live. He met the king of terrors with that calmness, which became his character, that rational calmness, which the principles of religion can alone inspire; having a humble confidence in the great Mediator, and an expectation of the life and immortality, which he brought to light. Through the burning restlessness of a fever, and frequent returns of violent pains, as his senses never left him, he never showed the least impatience, but expressed the most profound submission to the determinations of his heavenly Father, and died with a will entirely resolved into the divine.

"To his friends, his pastoral charge, and to all, who were acquainted with his virtues and his worth, his death was indeed untimely; for he had but just com-

pleted his twenty fourth year. But to himself he had lived long, and died full of days. 'For wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age.'"

This Church proceeded, in due time, to invite two young men* to settle over them, who successively refused their invitation.

They next invited Mr Robert Rogerson, a native of Scotland, a young man of unimpeachable character, to be their minister, who accepted the invitation. But parties arising among the people, on the ground, that he was a foreigner, whose early life they had not personally known, he was induced to leave them without ordination, and was settled at Rehoboth, where he fulfilled a long ministry, honorable to himself, and profitable to his people.

Mark now the inconsistencies, into which short-sighted mortals sometimes fall. Those very people, who objected to the candidate just mentioned, that he was a stranger, though he possessed ample credentials, proceeded suddenly to give a call to another,† from a distance, without credentials, before they had even ascertained his christian name, whom they as abruptly settled, and who, though professedly orthodox in faith, was destined, during a short ministry, to give woful emphasis to the apostle's monition, "Lay hands suddenly on no man."‡

On this disappointment of their fondest hopes, the people proceeded immediately to settle the Rev. Joseph

* T. C. D. p. 15. † T. C. D. p. 15.

‡ Rev. Nathaniel Potter married a Livermore, of Waltham, by whom he had a daughter Sarah, who died in infancy. After his death, his widow was married to Robert Pierpont Esq. of Roxbury.

Jackson,* my highly venerated predecessor, their fourth pastor, who, through a ministry of more than thirty six years, maintained a uniform character for prudence, integrity, and piety.

But two† are now living in this Town, who were living here, at the time of his ordination, 9 April, 1760, almost seventy seven years ago.

The ministry of Mr Jackson, as it has been always represented to me, was conducted with much wisdom and discretion, in a great measure undisturbed by internal dissensions, or outward assaults.

The severest trials he experienced, on the ground of interference, were from the son of a principal malecontent,‡ during the latter part of Mr Allen's ministry, who, as a Baptist exhorter, drew some from his fold; and who, with others, was instrumental in converting to the anti-pedobaptist faith nearly, if not quite every member of Mr Hyde's Church, with the exception of the pastor, who, to the day of his death, remained a pedobaptist, though he worshipped with the Baptist Church, in Newton. Such was the opinion entertained of his piety, it was the remark of the first pastor|| of said Church, that "he was always glad to see father Hyde at meeting; for he knew, that he had one praying hearer."§

* T. C. D. p. 16.

† Widow Jerusha Craft, born, 1 August, 1749, and widow Elisabeth Corey, born, 12 October, 1746, the oldest person now living in the Town.

‡ Deacon Elhanan Winchester. See Appendix V.

|| Rev. Caleb Blood.

§ For a minute account of the gathering of the Baptist Church, in Newton, and of the agency of Mr Elhanan Winchester, Jr., son of the Deacon, in making converts, see "A Sermon exhibiting the origin, progress, and present state of the Baptist Church and Society, in Newton, preached before them, on the first Lord's day, in January, 1830, by Joseph Grafton, Pastor of said Church."

It is not a little remarkable, that the young man,* who gave my predecessor so much trouble by attempts to build on his foundation, should, on his conversion to a new faith, give him still greater annoyance by the busy propagation of doctrines in his vicinity, regarded by him as highly latitudinarian in their tendency.†

I have given this sketch of our Church, before my own times, to impress on your minds, my hearers, and my own, our obligations to God for his distinguishing goodness to us, the last forty years. We have had our trials; but they have been greatly overbalanced by mercies; and our trials have been light, compared with those, which were suffered, in the earlier history of our Church.

At the commencement of my ministry, few were the avowed diversities of religious opinions in this place and among ministers and Churches in the surrounding region. Of late years how great the changes! Instead of the fathers have come the children, some of whom have embraced a different faith; and the frequent instances of emigration and immigration have tended to multiply these differences.

But notwithstanding these changes in our religious views, it is a subject of devout gratitude to God, that they have not led to such heart-burnings and alienations, in families and in neighborhoods, as have, in other places, disturbed the peace, and separated sworn friends. Though some have left us, and sought more congenial society and worship, with whom, in past seasons, we have "taken sweet counsel together, and gone to the house of God in company"; yet a respectable

* Appendix VI. † Appendix VII.

society still remains, who, it is devoutly to be hoped, will transmit unimpaired the religious institutions of their fathers to the latest posterity. In this regard, how different is our condition, my hearers, from that of many societies, which are continually changing, and never long satisfied; or in which the ordinances of our religion, so dear to the hearts of our fathers, have gone to decay; the ministry has become extinct; the people are indifferent to religion under every form, and are liable to the insidious arts of every designing intruder!

Blessed be God, who in these, and in other respects, makes us to differ from so many less favored communities. In point of toleration and brotherly love, only compare our intercourse among those, who differ from us, with that of dissentients in our neighboring Capital, during the early history of our country. There were then sanguinary laws and bitter persecutions levelled against the Baptists and Quakers. Gloomy are the pages, in the accounts of our puritan fathers, which record these transactions. How lovely the contrast which we now witness! How uniform, how undisturbed, how intimate the union between the recently organized Baptist Society* here and our own! In various benevolent enterprises of the day, how remarkable the co-operation! We have pleasantly walked together, where we could agree; and where we could not see, eye to eye, we have agreed to differ. Concerning their pastor, who has lately been separated from them, it is my willing testimony, that, during his residence among us, never have I heard a word from him, nor witnessed a transaction, in relation to our Society, which has given me a

* Appendix VIII.

moment's uneasiness. On the other hand, his kind offices, and those of his family, have been uniformly experienced, and gratefully reciprocated; and his efforts for the general peace and prosperity have been unintermitted and salutary. Most cordially do I respond to his parting testimony,* "rarely, very rarely does it happen, that two ministers of different denominations labor so harmoniously in the same field, as you and myself have done; and more harmoniously no two ministers of even the same communion could have labored." It is my firm belief, that a similar union so sincerely cherished, and so touchingly expressed, has been generally maintained between the two Societies. What lover of peace and religious toleration but must strive and pray, that it may be perpetual!

The forty years, to which my ministry has been prolonged, it will be recollected, is the period, in which the Israelites were traveling and sojourning in the wilderness from their departure out of Egypt to their arrival at the promised land. It will be also remembered, that of the immense numbers, who left the place of their inglorious servitude, at adult age, but two, Caleb and Joshua, survived to enter the country of their inheritance. All the rest of this great company fell in the wilderness. "Having obtained help of God," you, my friends, have been more highly favored. For of the comparatively small number, below six hundred, who were living here, forty years ago, twenty six, of whom nine are men, and seventeen women, who were adults, at that period, are now living in the Town. The whole number now surviving here, who were born at that period, is fifty five,

* In a letter to the author.

of whom twenty one are men and thirty four women.

Of this number I reckon twenty one men and twenty six women, in the whole forty seven, older, than your pastor; and there are ten couples in the Town, who have been longer connected in the marriage union.

At the organization of this Church, there were thirty nine, of whom were seventeen men and twenty two women.

At the close of Mr Allen's ministry, the number of communicants had been one hundred and fifty four. During Mr Brown's ministry, but three were added to the Church; during Mr Potter's, sixteen; during Mr Jackson's, one hundred and thirty; and, for the last forty years, one hundred and ninety five, fifty three males and one hundred and forty two females. Of this number, seventy six were of those, who had attended my catechisings or the sabbath school.

At my ordination, there were twenty two resident male communicants and thirty female, making fifty two; and eight non-resident male members, and twenty five female, in the whole eighty five.

All the communicants of this Church, who were admitted, during the ministry of the first three pastors, have deceased. Of those admitted, under Mr Jackson's ministry, twenty three are living, eight men and fifteen women. Of members admitted, during my ministry, are thirty men and one hundred and seven women, making the whole number alive one hundred and sixty.

Of the one hundred and ninety five admitted, during my ministry, fifty six have died, fifty six live out of Town, fifteen have been dismissed to other Churches,

eleven have become Baptists, six* have been preachers of the gospel, of whom one is President of Bowdoin College, four have left without joining any other Church, one became a Roman Catholic, and one a Universalist.

There has been, for a number of years past, a gradual, but steady increase of population. By the census of 1790, there were 515 inhabitants; in 1800, 605; in 1810, 784; in 1820, 900; in 1830, 1040.

At the time of my ordination, there were 72 dwelling houses,† and the same number of families. Of these dwellings, 34 were below the Meeting house, and 38 above.

There are now 151 dwelling houses, 79 below the Meeting house, and 72 above; in which, during some part of the year, there have been 176 families, 99 below the Meeting house, and 77 above.

II. It becomes us, in the second place, to remember not only the Lord's mercies; but also our trials.

In the retrospect of forty years, how great has been their number! What considerate person has passed so short a period, as not to have experienced his share?

Wherever we turn our view, what changes salute us! Even if for the better, they loudly admonish us, that "the fashion of this world passeth away," and we are passing away with it.

Though, if we properly contemplate the subject, we

* Rev. William Allen, D. D. President of Bowdoin College, Me.
Rev. Jesse Fisher, late minister of Windham, Conn.
Rev. Samuel Clark, late minister of Burlington, Vt.
Rev. Joseph Haven, minister of Billerica.
Rev. Increase Sumner Davis, minister of Wentworth, N. H.
Rev. David Hatch Barlow, minister of Brooklyn N. Y.

† C. C. D. p. 27.

must acknowledge, that the Lord's mercies are far more numerous, than his judgments; yet who has passed over the period specified in the text, and has not had his days of mourning? Few, through so long a season, are exempt from bodily diseases and pains; none are without grievous mental inquietudes.

If, for a length of time, relieved from personal sufferings, how deeply is our sympathy excited by the sickness and death of those, who are near and dear to our hearts!

Since my settlement in this Town, there have been 423 deaths, 209 males and 214 females. Of these 20 lived to 80 and upwards; 51 to 70 and upwards. The oldest person was 94, and the next oldest, 92. In Roxbury families, worshipping with us, the deaths have been 58, 28 males and 30 females.

The deaths of church members have been 71, 33 males and 38 females; of occasional communicants, 6 males and 25 females; and belonging to all other communions, 4 males and 9 females; in the whole, 115, more than one quarter of all the deaths.

During my ministry, 2 have died, who joined the Church under the first minister, 73, who were admitted by Mr Jackson, and 56 of my admissions, in the whole 160.

Alas! in the successive occurrence of so many deaths, how many tender ties have been dissevered! How often has the conjugal union been invaded! How many brothers and sisters have been separated! How often have children been called to mourn the departure of beloved parents! How frequently have the hearts of fathers and mothers been torn with anguish, at the loss of promising children!

III. Thirdly, the season calls on us to consider the swift flight of time, that we may properly lament, what has been misimproved, and more faithfully occupy the short span, which remains.

I know not, how it is with others; but, in my view, the last 40 years have rolled away with inconceivable velocity.

Events succeed each other so imperceptibly, that, unless you take some landmarks, you can hardly realize, how rapidly you are passing down the stream of time.

As one memorial, take then the fact, that of the 72* houses, standing, 40 years ago, 14, about one fifth part, have been demolished; that but 35 have fragments of the same families living in them, as then; that 6 only have the same owners, 3 below the Meeting house, and 3 above; that but 4 of these have the same occupants; and but 2, the same united heads.†

Thirty years ago, last June, 66 pews in this house were either purchased or hired. In 14 only of these do any of the same families now sit, as then. Eleven only have the same owners; 8 the same occupants; and of these 6 only, where both partners are living.

At the time of my call to settle, there were 66 legal voters, but 12 of whom are supposed to be living, 9 belong to this Town, 8 to this Parish, and 6 are communicants of this Church.

Of 22 male Church members, at the time of my ordination, but 4 are living, 3 of whom communicate with us.

In 40 instances, both heads of families have died; and in 4 cases, there has been the death of a husband and two wives.

* C. C. D. p. 27. † Appendix IX.

In this period, there have died 75 male heads of families, and 70 female, amounting to 145.

There were two Committees, one of the Church, consisting of three, and the other, of the Town, consisting of two, who presented me the call to settle in the ministry ; but one of the whole number is now living.

Of housekeepers here, at the time of my ordination, 10 are living below the Meeting house, and 6 above ; but 8 of whom occupy the same houses ; and but 3 couples remain, who were then living together.

Fourteen ministers were invited to assist in my ordination ; but 5 of whom are now living. Of the 6, who took part in the public religious exercises, but one remains, and he has recently resigned his pastoral office.

IV. The season should, fourthly, lead us, both as pastor and people, to ponder our defects and sins, and "flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us."

What these are, let the conscience of each one decide. If we will but impartially examine ourselves by the word of God, we may find much, that is amiss ; much, which should humble us under the mighty hand of God, and lead us to pray earnestly for forgiveness through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Faith in him, repentance, and correspondent fruits are the only revealed terms, on which we are encouraged to hope.

These things being so, it is of infinite importance to decide, whether our faith be such, as the Lord Jesus requires ? Is it within us a vital, practical principle, formed by diligent study of the scriptures ? Or are we indifferent, whether we have faith, or not ? Or do we content ourselves with a merely speculative faith, which, though with great pretensions to soundness, produces not its proper fruits, and is therefore barren and ineffectual ?

Let us also be solicitous to ascertain, whether we have repented after a godly sort? We cannot become acquainted with the rudiments of the gospel, but we must perceive the stress laid on repentance by our Savior, his evangelists, and apostles. This was the leading doctrine urged and reiterated by him, who came to prepare the way of the Lord. By the testimony of Mark, our Savior began his public ministry by calling on men to "repent and believe the gospel." The apostle Paul shows his sense of its importance, when he speaks, as the burden of his preaching, of "testifying to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Does not pastoral fidelity require me then, my beloved hearers, to inquire, with due solicitude, whether you have thought on your ways, by the instructions and directions of God's word; and whether you have cherished that godly sorrow for your sins, which is the first step toward their renunciation?

But faith and repentance, their connected duties, and intended results, it is well known, are exceedingly liable to perversion. There are good reasons for supposing it the main design of the apostle James, in his epistle, to guard against the false constructions of many, in his day, who had misinterpreted the expression of Paul, that "man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

It is however a sufficient safeguard against every such misapprehension, if we will but attentively consider, that each apostle adduces the patriarch Abraham, as evincing a right faith. But how is it possible to conceive of a more practical faith, which led directly to correspondent works, than that, which was evinced by this "father of the faithful?"

In relation to this subject, there are two extremes, against which it becomes us carefully to guard.

One is to make faith and repentance merely speculative principles, without regard to their indispensable practical results; and hence to judge of their acceptableness, in the sight of God, by lively emotions, by sensible experiences, or by positive convictions of the truth, akin to infallibility, and by forwardness to search and condemn others, who come not to the same standard. This disposition argues an arrogant claim to unerring rectitude of opinion. It would be difficult to find a temper, against which our Savior and his apostles bear more decided testimony.

The opposite extreme, which demands equal caution, is to conclude, that a life influenced by the mere maxims of worldly policy is sufficient to recommend us to the favor of the Most High. So thought not the blessed Jesus, as he traces all virtue to the heart. "A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth that, which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth that, which is evil."

Settle it then in your minds, my hearers, whether the Bible make not repentance, faith, and holiness essential to divine acceptance, on the merciful terms of the christian covenant; and if so, whether "these things are in you, and abound, so that ye are neither barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

These truths and admonitions, it is believed, have been proclaimed to you and your fathers by your five successive pastors, for more than 118 years.

If your pastor knows himself, it has been his heart's desire, and daily prayer to God, that you may all come

to the knowledge and practice of these truths, and be saved, through the mediation of our merciful and faithful High Priest. It was the prayer of John Wesley, an eminent instrument in the salvation of souls, " Lord, let me not live to be useless." To the same sentiment your pastor most devoutly responds.

It has been my privilege, either in person, or by substitutes, to supply the pulpit, during these forty years, twice, every Lord's day, but one ; and that was, on 27 January, 1805, when the depth of snow prevented the person engaged from coming to this place. I have been detained from preaching, by indisposition, since my settlement here, but thirteen sabbaths ; the last, on 3 March, 1816, more than 21 years ago.

There have been, in this time, 449 communions, all but six of which I have administered.

I have had 327 public Lectures, of which 149 were preached by myself, and 178 by others. Within the last ten years, there have been 200 private meetings, at all, but five of which, I have officiated.

There have been 4682 sermons, preached here, in public, since the care of the pulpit was intrusted to me. Of these 2443 have been preached by myself and 2239 by others.

In the mean time, our Church has received 66 letters to attend ordinations and installations ; and 8, soliciting our aid on advisory Councils.

I have solemnised 180 marriages ; and it is not a little remarkable, that there have been for the last 45 years, but 5 couples so united, of which each party was a native of this Town.

V. In the fifth and last place, the occasion urges all to prepare for the destination, which, we know not how soon, awaits us.

This use the apostle to the Hebrews makes of this portion of sacred history. After considering the rest, for which the Israelites sighed in Canaan, as typical of the "rest, that remaineth for the people of God," he exhorts, "let us labor therefore to enter into that rest."

To attain to this consummation is, my hearers, the great object, which your pastor should propose, and which, he humbly trusts, he has had mainly in view, both for himself, and his people.

I presume not to judge, how many, who have made no profession of their faith in Christ, have good hope, through grace, of final acceptance. Much less will I attempt to decide, what portion of those, who are the nominal friends of Jesus, are nevertheless, by their habitual temper and deportment, "the enemies of the cross, whose end is destruction." Admonished by the apostle to "judge nothing before the time," I readily submit this decision to the judgment of the great day.

But this I will declare, that it gives me great pain to be able to induce no more to come forward, and espouse the cause of Christ before men. There are several of different ages, especially among the younger part of my hearers, and, above all, who are young heads of families, with infants growing up under their care, whom I long to see choosing "that good part, which cannot be taken from them," devoting not only themselves, but their offspring also to their God and Savior. I marvel, that my earnest prayers and endeavors to this purpose have not been more successful. It is perhaps to excite me to more zealous and promising efforts, and to convince me, more and more, that "God alone can give the increase." Not that the people, under my ministry, have been singularly deficient in this respect. The av-

erage additions, from the gathering of the Church, have been about 4 annually ; while, during my ministry, the average has been about 5.

Of the present Church I reckon 19, who are lineal descendants from the founders, in 1717,* some of the fourth, fifth, and sixth, and one, at least, of the seventh generation, both inclusive, from Joseph White, the fourth among the founders.

Of the 76 members of my Church, who had attended my catechetical instructions, 17 are numbered with the dead. May God almighty raise up others from our youth, who shall offer the flower of their age to the blessed Redeemer !

To all capable of weighing the subject, and desirous of presenting themselves " a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," I am commissioned by my Master to say, " All things are ready ; come to the marriage " supper of the Lamb, and begin no longer to make excuses.

Let me also urge all concerned, who have no plea of ill health, to bring their children to the baptismal font. Were a judgment to be formed from the growing neglect of public infant baptism, it might be natural to infer, that we are becoming anti-pedobaptists. O let not fashion be suffered to extend its iron sway to the house, and the very ordinances of the Lord. There are obvious reasons, which should induce parents, who are able and conscientious, to make a public presentation of their offspring, in the ordinance of baptism. It certainly requires much less effort and self-denial, than the ordinance, as it is administered by our Baptist brethren.

The privileges and blessings of Sabbath schools† I

* C. C. D. p. 25.

† Begun here, 2 July, 1826, and continued without intermission from 4 May, 1828.

can omit no opportunity of earnestly recommending, because I feel morally certain of the advantages, which they are instrumental in affording to both teachers and pupils, as well as parents. Much has been done in this business, among us, which I hope duly to estimate, and gratefully to acknowledge. My earnest wish is to press more into this delightful service. How can we better execute the direction of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go?" How can we more rationally hope to enjoy the gratification acknowledged by the apostle? "I can have no greater joy, than to see my children walking in the truth?"

There is a continually increasing call for this instruction. In my investigations, the last season, to ascertain the number of children to be included in the School return to the General Court, I found 142 below the Meeting house, and 108 above, between the ages of 4 and 16. What can be more desirable, than that these should enjoy every possible advantage for receiving early religious instructions and impressions? Who can doubt, that Sabbath School instruction offers the best opportunities for all, and the only opportunities for some to seek and to acquire religious wisdom?

Finally, my hearers, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing, that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle. Moreover I will endeavor, that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance."

APPENDIX.

I.

Account of a Revival of religion in Brookline, by the Rev. James Allen, pastor, in a letter addressed to the Rev. William Cooper, Moderator in a meeting of ministers.

It appears, that the Convention of ministers, who assembled, in Boston, in May, 1743, were not, as a body, favorable to the revivals of religion produced by the instrumentality of the Rev. George Whitfield, and others.

A meeting of Congregational ministers friendly to such measures was therefore called to meet, in the Capital, the subsequent summer; and the following is the testimony of Mr Allen. See Christian History, Vol. I. p. 394.

"*Brookline, July*, 1743.

To the Rev. William Cooper.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—Mr Balch has been pleased to come thus far out of his way to bring me the glad tidings of your united testimony to the work of God. I am not able to express the joy, with which I received the news; and consequent upon it, I was not able to come to town to-day, being very much indisposed by the head-ache, &c. But, Sir, I was thoughtful of you, the committee, I mean, and now thank the Lord, that my secret supplications are so suddenly and fully answered. I did not give in, as some did, a verbal testimony to the effusions of the Divine Spirit in a work of conversion and grace among us. I thought, my being present was sufficient; and then my natural temper ever restrains me from speaking upon such occasions before those much wiser and better than myself. But I have since wished, I had, to the glory of free and sovereign grace, made a short declaration in the following manner.

That there has been a very distinguishing and remarkable work of God going on in the land, I have been so much a witness to,

in many towns, where I have occasionally been, within these two years, that, I think, I am as firm in the belief of it, as of the sun in the firmament, or of my own existence. For what, but the God, that formed it, can so impress the mind with the sense of sin, and its destructive consequents, as to cause the greatest sorrow of heart, and streams of penitential tears to flow from the eyes? What can create in the soul earnest, restless, and vehement desires after the love, grace, and fellowship of Christ, but that God, who first formed the spirit of man within him, and can turn the heart, as a river of water? Who, but the God of grace, can make the drunkard temperate, and the prodigal son a sober, serious man, &c., which things have been common in other places, to my frequent observation.

Nor are *we* destitute of some signal instances of free and sovereign grace among us here. There have been scores of persons under awakenings. Yea, I have sometimes thought, there has not been a single person in my congregation, but has been under more or less concern about the important matters of another world, and what he should do to be saved. Though these impressions, I fear, are worn off in many; yet in others, I have no reason to doubt, that they have been carried on to a sound and saving conversion. Additions to the Church have been considerable for numbers of such, as, I hope, through grace shall be saved; and chiefly of younger persons; one of but eleven years of age; another in the eleventh and last hour of life, being above seventy; three of a liberal education, two of them since, hopeful young preachers. In some few the terrors have been so great, that they have cried out in distress. In others, the liberal communications of divine light and joy have had a like effect. One of our young converts died, the last Fall, in a very glorious and triumphant manner; the only one, that has died among us, since the blessed work began. I was called to visit her, about ten, the evening before she died; and finding her very low in spirits, as well as body, I tarried all night, sometimes discoursing, and sometimes praying with her. But she received no comfort. In the morning, after prayer, she turned her face to the wall, and lay still, for a little time, and then broke out, and said, 'Now I am ready to die; now I am ready to die.' I immediately stepped to her, and said, Child, have you found Christ? 'O, yes,' said she, 'I have

found him; I have found him.' I asked her, if she was now assured of the love of Christ to her? She answered, 'I am sure; I am sure. Now I can leave parents and friends, and all for Christ. Come, Lord Jesus; O sweet Jesus! O the anthems of joy! O sweet! sweet! sweet!' and other expressions of the like nature. In which happy frame she continued, about two or three hours, and then breathed out her soul into the bosom of Jesus, her beloved. These things are the Lord's doings, and loudly call for our admiration and praise."

This statement is in the style of extravagance usual with the friends of these excitements, at that day. For a minute account of such proceedings, in many places, see "Seasonable thoughts on the state of religion in New England, by Charles Chauncy, D. D. pastor of the First Church of Christ, in Boston," an 8vo. of 424 pages, published, in 1743.

That the above account partakes of the exaggerations, common in those times, may appear from the following considerations.

1. There was not a single addition to the Church, in Brookline, during the whole year, in which Mr Allen's communication was written. There were but 8 admissions, in 1742; 13, in 1741; 1, in 1740; and none, in 1738 and 1739. Surely the additions to the Church of but 22, in six years, less than the average, during his ministry, can hardly warrant the language employed by Mr Allen in his letter.

2. From the phraseology used, it seems clearly implied, if not asserted, that the three of liberal education, mentioned in the letter, were fruits of the revival. Yet the only men of liberal education, admitted to the Church here, near to that period, were the Rev. Jonathan Winchester, afterward of Ashburnham, who joined this Church, 11 December, 1737; the Rev. Charles Gleason, afterward of Dudley, who was admitted, 29 June, 1740; and John Druce, afterward physician, in Wrentham, who was received, on 25 April, 1742.

3. The excited state, into which Mr Allen's mind was brought, was soon succeeded by very different feelings and views on the subject, as will appear by the date and tenor of the paper, in Appendix II., written but nine months after his account of the revival, a communication from persons, who seceded from his Church and ministry, on account of the sudden change in his sentiments, preaching, and measures.

II.

"*Brookline*, 22 *April*, 1744.

To the Rev. James Allen.

Whereas we, whose names are underwritten, as well as some others, having withdrawn ourselves from your ministry, and from communion with your Church, where you with the Church receive us, promising to watch over us, and be as helpful to us, as you can, which, we think, has not been fulfilled, inasmuch as you have not called any of us to give the reasons of our conduct, although you say, that we have run into a damning error; and having desired you to set apart some time to discourse about the reasons of our withdraw; but you refused, and said, you would not take the name of God in vain so much, as to talk with us.

Now we desire with humility and meekness to give you the reasons of our withdraw from you and your Church, hoping, that the blessing of God will accompany them for the removing of those stumbling blocks, which, we fear, some have stumbled at. And we desire, that you would lay them before your Church.

And now the reasons are, as follows.

I. The first reason, we shall mention, is Mr Allen's speaking against that, which, we think, to be the glorious work of God; but he calls it a delusion.

II. His speaking against those ministers, which, we believe, the Lord has sent out to invite sinners to Christ. Mr Allen warns people not to go to hear them, and said, they, that go to hear them, go upon the Devil's ground.

III. We cannot join with Mr Allen in letting in those to preach, who, we fear, are strangers to the life and power of God in their souls; because they preach only the form, as we think. One of which coming into Mr Allen's house, one time, he said, he had as lief seen the Devil.

IV. We think, Mr Allen's preaching had a tendency to settle persons down upon works; for he, speaking to persons out of Christ, that, if they used the means, as praying, and attending public worship and ordinances, and refrained from all sin as much, as they could, they might humbly hope to be saved.

V. We fear, Mr Allen had not such regard for truth, as he should have. For when Mr Buel preached at this Town, he said, it was enough to convince an atheist, that he was wonderfully assisted by the spirit of God. But afterward he seems to deny it

all; and said to some, the more they heard him, the more they would see of his weakness; and said, if they followed him, they would be lodging in hell. And Mr Allen told a woman, that she had not heard a sermon, for two years, who had, within that time, heard old Mr Walter, Mr Moody, Mr Davenport, Mr Bliss, Mr Rogers, Mr Buel, Mr Paine, &c.

VI. We cannot join with Mr Allen in saying, Lord, thou knowest, if we had the command of our own hearts, we would open the door to let Christ in; and saying, that natural persons will fare the better in hell for their duties.

VII. We fear, that Mr Allen is not a faithful shepherd; for when speaking about one of the brethren of the Church, he said, he did not care, what became of him. The person said, do you not care, what becomes of his soul? He said, he did not care, what became of it. Speaking of another of the brethren of the Church, he said, that fellow had corrupted the whole family, meaning his father's, some of which, we do believe, are the children of God.

VIII. Mr Allen has lived at variance with one of his neighbors, almost four years, and declines to make it up with him, though requested by him and others.

Now these are the reasons, with some others, that might have been given, for which we withdraw from you. And now for these things we have been much displeased; and we desire to mourn before the Lord for these things, whereby the spirit of the Lord has been grieved. And now we desire to confess to the great Lord and Head of the Church our sin in going away, before we had given these reasons of our going away. And we desire the forgiveness of those, whom we have justly offended; and now we desire the prayers of all those, that do love our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may be enabled to walk, as becomes the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ebenezer Kenrick, Nathaniel Shepard, John Seaver, Jr., Elhanan Winchester, Jr., Richard Seaver, Dudley Boylston, Jr."

This change in Mr Allen's views of the state of religion in this place, tradition uniformly ascribes to the growing extravagances of the day, and among his people, from which his mind revolted.

That he retained, to the end of life, the popular faith, is evident from his Election sermon, delivered, 30 May, 1744, entitled 'Magistracy an institution of Christ upon the throne,' as also from the

testimony of a clergyman of the like faith, who preached here, during his sickness, and who visited him on his dying bed.*

The only remark, which will now be made on the result of these transactions in this place is, that, for nearly fourteen subsequent years, but four persons were admitted to this Church, and they by letters from sister Churches, and of these two were ordained, as pastors.

III.

In the Boston Weekly Newsletter, 1 March, 1750, is the following.

"*Brookline*, 28 *February*.

On Wednesday last, died here, of a fever, Mary Allen, daughter of the late Rev. James Allen, of this town, a young gentlewoman of an unblemished character, the virtues of whose life were so conspicuous, as to render her very amiable in the eyes of all her acquaintance.

The late dispensations of heaven toward this family have been surprisingly grievous and sorrowful. Mr Allen, their head, made his exit, 18 Feb. 1747; his consort, 27 June, 1748; their son, Dec. 1749; and now this young lady; upon which last bereavement, the whole family is cut off; and all within the term of three years. But though their name is now blotted out from under heaven, we trust it is enrolled above the stars; and that they are all of them possessing an inheritance there."

Mr Allen's children were,—1. Shepard, born, 15 September, 1721, died, 6 October, 1721; 2. James, born, 20 September, 1723, died, December, 1749; 3. Mary, born, 25 October, 1725, died, February, 1750; 4. Mehetable, born, 4 January, 1728, died, 24 February, 1729.

IV.

Mr Brown's articles of faith delivered to the Church.

"I believe, that the scriptures are given by inspiration of God; that they are the unerring rule of faith and practice; that they are able to make us wise unto salvation; and that whatever is necessary to be known or believed, in order to salvation, is clearly revealed, and made level to every common capacity.

I believe in God the Father, the Creator of the world, and Lord

* T. C. D. p. 14.

of heaven and earth; and in his Son Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and the only Savior of men; and in the Holy Ghost, by whose influences men are sanctified and comforted. I believe, that these three are united in the common design of advancing their own glory, and promoting the happiness of men.

I believe the scripture doctrine of original sin, viz. that by one man sin entered into the world; that by his disobedience many are made sinners; that our natures are very much depraved; and that, as all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, so they are become guilty before him, and are unworthy of the least of his mercies.

I believe, that salvation is the free gift of God; that it is entirely owing to his unbounded mercy, that any of the children of men do arrive at everlasting glory; that it is not by works of righteousness, which we have done; but according to his mercy and grace, that he saveth us.

I believe the scripture doctrine of election, viz. that God has chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; that he has predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; and that we are chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.

I believe, that to accomplish this great salvation, God was pleased, according to the riches of his grace, to send his Son into the world to die for the sins of men; and that accordingly he suffered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; and that it is by virtue of his meritorious passion, that we are now reconciled to God.

I believe, that God's tender mercies are over all his works; and that he is not willing, that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance.

I believe, that, unless God afford the gracious influences of his spirit, we cannot do any thing in religion, that shall be acceptable in his sight; and that he must work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and carry on the work of faith with power; otherwise we cannot be saved.

I believe, that we are justified freely by God's grace, through

the redemption, that is in Jesus Christ, without the deeds of the law; that justification is of grace, and not of debt.

I believe, that it is necessary, we should be sanctified by the Divine Spirit, in order to our obtaining heaven; and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

I believe, that, after man is born again of the Spirit, or become the sincere servant of God, it is necessary, he should continue with patience in the ways of well doing, in order to his obtaining everlasting life; and that God, who begins the good work in us, will carry it on to the day of Christ.

I believe, that the souls of all men, immediately upon their separation from the body, do enter into a state of happiness or misery; and that every human body shall be raised again, and be reunited to its respective soul.

Lastly, as there shall be a general resurrection of the just and unjust, I believe, that all men must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and be rewarded, according to their works; that the righteous shall obtain eternal life, and the wicked suffer everlasting punishment."

V.

For some account of Deacon Elhanan Winchester, father of the celebrated preacher, bearing the same name, see C. C. D. p. 31. I have since seen memorable sayings of Elhanan Winchester, preserved, in manuscript, by the Elders of "the Millenial Church, or United Society of Believers, commonly called Shakers," at Harvard. But they sound too much like the effusions of a man, in his dotage, to be worthy of publication, he having been converted to the faith, which he last embraced, at the close of life. He died among the Shakers, at Harvard, immediately after his arrival there, on 10 September, 1810, Æt. 91.

VI.

Elhanan Winchester, junr. son of Deacon Elhanan, was born, in Brookline, in 1751, and baptized, in his infancy, by Mr Jonathan Hyde, Separatist and Pedobaptist. In process of time, Mr Winchester, was converted to the Baptist faith, was highly celebrated in preaching its doctrines, and admitted numbers into the church by immersion. On visiting England, he embraced the doctrine of the final restoration of all men, preached it there and in his own country with considerable success, published a number

of volumes defending his sentiments, both in Europe and America. He died in Hartford, Connecticut, where, in the North Burial ground, there is a monument with this inscription.

"The General Convention of Universalist Churches, in memory of their dear departed brother, the Rev. Elhanan Winchester, erected this monumental stone. He died, 18 April, 1797, Æt. 46.

'Twas thine to preach with animating zeal
The glories of the Restitution morn,
When sin, death, hell the power of Christ shall feel,
And light, life, immortality be born."

VII.

The Rev. Joseph Jackson married Hannah, daughter of John Avery, Esq., of Boston, by whom he had two children, Sarah and Joseph.

Sarah married Atherton Thayer, Esq., of Braintree, and then his brother Stephen. By the former, she had two daughters; and by the latter a son and a daughter.

She died, 7 Feb. 1809, Æt. 45.

Her mother died, 2 October, 1800.

Joseph, the only son, was graduated at Cambridge, in 1787, and died, while student of Medicine with Dr Cutter, of Portsmouth, N. H. 19 August, 1790, Æt. 23.

The late Dr Foster, of Brighton, has repeatedly informed me, that, at his own ordination, 1 November, 1784, Mr Jackson was Moderator, and prevented him from reading the confession of his faith before the Council, on the ground, that the Council had no right to demand it; and added, that, at his own ordination, 9 April, 1760, he had, on the same principle, positively refused to be examined, as to his religious faith. From such a man, and at such periods, these facts are not a little remarkable.

VIII.

The Baptist Church, in Brookline, was gathered, on 5 June, 1828, consisting of 12 males and 24 females.

The Meeting house was dedicated, on 20 November, of the same year.

The Rev. Joseph M. Driver was installed their first pastor, on 25 March, 1830.

The Rev. Joseph Andrews Warne, from the city of London, was installed their second pastor, 14 April, 1831, and preached

his farewell sermon, on 29 January, 1837, and was soon installed over the third Baptist Church, in Providence, R. I.

IX.

Of the 61 Dwelling houses enumerated in C. C. D. p. 26, as standing, in 1740, 18 are now remaining; but not a single house is inhabited by a descendant of a proprietor at that time.

Fill the blank at 6 in the number of the houses with Samuel.

X.

In addition to the Church plate, mentioned in T. C. D. p. 26, two silver cups were presented to the Church, on 2 August, 1818, by Miss Prudence Heath; and, on 4 October, of the same year, two silver cups were also given, one by Deacon John Robinson, the other by Mrs Lucy Robinson, his wife.

The Church, in the mean time, purchased from their own funds two large silver plates; so that the whole Communion service is now of silver.

XI.

Of the graduates at Harvard University, who were natives of Brookline, mentioned T. C. D. p.27, the following, as there numbered, have since died.

15. 1761. * Samuel Sewall, went, as a refugee, to England, where he died, May, 1811, Æt. 66.
16. 1764. * Hon. William Aspinwall, M. D., an eminent practitioner, as a physician, in his native Town, died, 16 April, 1823, Æt. 80. See his biography in the Medical Biography of Dr James Thacher, of Plymouth.
19. 1777. * Hon. John Goddard, died at Portsmouth, N. H. 18 December, 1829, Æt. 73.
23. 1804. * William Aspinwall, M. D. died, 7 April, 1818, Æt. 34.
25. 1805. * Rev. Samuel Clark, son of Deacon Samuel Clark, great-grandson of Deacon Samuel Clark, one of the early officers of this Church, died at Burlington, Vt. 2 May, 1827, Æt. 45.
26. 1805. * Isaac Sparhawk Gardner, grandson of Isaac Gardner, Esq. who fell in Lexington battle, and great great grandson of Deacon Thomas Gardner, first Deacon of this Church, is supposed to have died at the Southward, some years since; though it is not known when, nor where.

Since 1805, two natives of the Town have been graduated at Harvard University.

27. 1831. Rev. John Tappan Pierce, son of the present pastor, was ordained an Evangelist, at Oberlin, Ohio, 15 Oct., 1836.

28. 1834. * Nathaniel Bowditch Ingersoll, teacher of the Classical School, in Brookline, where he died, 31 May, 1836, Æt. 22.

So that there are but three graduates at Cambridge, natives of Brookline, supposed to be alive.

The graduates at other Colleges from this Town have been,

1. 1762. Princeton, N. J. * Caleb White died, 16 Dec. 1770, Æt. 30.

2. 1811. Brown University, R. I. Dr Luther Metcalf Harris, M. D. Physician in Roxbury.

3. 1824. do. Rev. William Leverett, ordained Baptist minister, at Roxbury, 20 Jan. 1825.

4—5. 1832. Do. Twins. Rev. Washington Leverett, Professor at Shurtleff College, Alton, Illinois; Warren Leverett, Senior, in the Newton Theological Institution.

The last three are brothers.

Mr. George Griggs is Senior at Brown University.

There is also a Baptist clergyman from this town, the Rev. Benjamin Niles Harris, who has not received a collegiate education.